

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

786

July 28, 2015

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St SW
Washington, DC 20554-0004

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

We urged the Commission to preserve the duplex gap for use by wireless microphones in all markets. We are encouraged by the Commission's willingness and openness to study a wide range of options to accommodate wireless microphones but such openness should maximize the amount of spectrum available to accommodate wireless microphones.

In particular, local broadcast television stations in our communities would be severely impacted by the FCC's recent decision to do away with the 4 MHz duplex gap. Wireless microphones play an important role in news gathering. It is an essential tool that enables local broadcasters to cover local and national news, including breaking news and natural and man-made disasters.

Last year, the Commission took the controversial step of eliminating the exclusive channels that are reserved in the broadcast television spectrum band to ensure that broadcasters have access to some spectrum for wireless microphones. The Commission also adopted a compromise proposal that would have allowed wireless microphones to use 4 MHz of spectrum in the "duplex gap", a guard band between the uplink and downlink portions of the new wireless band to continue to operate following the upcoming broadcast incentive auction. Now, we understand that the Commission has reversed course, and intends to move forward with a new proposal that will leave local broadcasters in some markets with no reserved spectrum for the wireless microphones that are essential to cover breaking news.


We urge the Commission to reject this proposal, and instead to preserve the duplex gap for use by wireless microphones in all markets, which will enable broadcasters and other news outlets to continue to rely on this critical technology in their reports.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress


G.K. Butterfield
Member of Congress


Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

August 20, 2015

The Honorable G.K. Butterfield
U.S. House of Representatives
2305 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

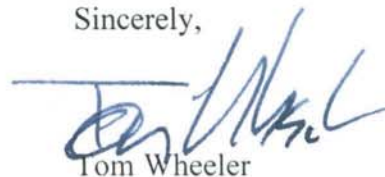
Dear Congressman Butterfield:

Thank you for your letter urging the Commission to preserve the 600 MHz duplex gap for use by wireless microphones in all markets. The Commission adopted new rules on August 5, 2015, to address the long-term needs of wireless microphone users by providing for continued access to the 600 MHz band and expanding access to other bands. The new rules specifically will allow all Part 74 licensed microphone users to operate in a 4-megahertz portion of the 600 MHz duplex gap (*i.e.*, broadcasters, cable programming networks, movie studios, and operators at major sporting/concerts/theater venues). The Commission may need to place a broadcaster in the duplex gap in a limited number of markets. However, the Commission sought comment on preserving an additional vacant television channel for use by wireless microphones and white space devices should this occur.

The rules also provide new opportunities for licensed microphone users. In the TV bands, they will be allowed greater use of the VHF channels and co-channel operation inside digital TV contours without coordination if TV signals fall below specified thresholds. The new rules also will allow licensed microphone users to operate on a secondary basis in three additional spectrum bands, consistent with the Commission's spectrum management goals: (1) access to significantly more spectrum in the 900 MHz band; (2) access to a portion of the 1435-1525 MHz band at specified times and places, subject to coordination requirements that protect critical aeronautical mobile telemetry; and (3) access to portions of the 6875-7125 MHz band.

Together with the rules also adopted by the Commission regarding unlicensed wireless microphone use of the 600 MHz band, these new rules provide for efficient sharing of the TV and 600 MHz bands to accommodate various wireless microphone users, while continuing to protect the licensed users of each of the bands. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

August 20, 2015

The Honorable Tony Cárdenas
U.S. House of Representatives
1508 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

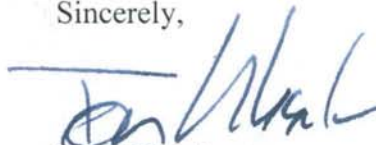
Dear Congressman Cárdenas:

Thank you for your letter urging the Commission to preserve the 600 MHz duplex gap for use by wireless microphones in all markets. The Commission adopted new rules on August 5, 2015, to address the long-term needs of wireless microphone users by providing for continued access to the 600 MHz band and expanding access to other bands. The new rules specifically will allow all Part 74 licensed microphone users to operate in a 4-megahertz portion of the 600 MHz duplex gap (*i.e.*, broadcasters, cable programming networks, movie studios, and operators at major sporting/concerts/theater venues). The Commission may need to place a broadcaster in the duplex gap in a limited number of markets. However, the Commission sought comment on preserving an additional vacant television channel for use by wireless microphones and white space devices should this occur.

The rules also provide new opportunities for licensed microphone users. In the TV bands, they will be allowed greater use of the VHF channels and co-channel operation inside digital TV contours without coordination if TV signals fall below specified thresholds. The new rules also will allow licensed microphone users to operate on a secondary basis in three additional spectrum bands, consistent with the Commission's spectrum management goals: (1) access to significantly more spectrum in the 900 MHz band; (2) access to a portion of the 1435-1525 MHz band at specified times and places, subject to coordination requirements that protect critical aeronautical mobile telemetry; and (3) access to portions of the 6875-7125 MHz band.

Together with the rules also adopted by the Commission regarding unlicensed wireless microphone use of the 600 MHz band, these new rules provide for efficient sharing of the TV and 600 MHz bands to accommodate various wireless microphone users, while continuing to protect the licensed users of each of the bands. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



Tom Wheeler



OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

August 20, 2015

The Honorable Bobby L. Rush
U.S. House of Representatives
2268 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Rush:

Thank you for your letter urging the Commission to preserve the 600 MHz duplex gap for use by wireless microphones in all markets. The Commission adopted new rules on August 5, 2015, to address the long-term needs of wireless microphone users by providing for continued access to the 600 MHz band and expanding access to other bands. The new rules specifically will allow all Part 74 licensed microphone users to operate in a 4-megahertz portion of the 600 MHz duplex gap (*i.e.*, broadcasters, cable programming networks, movie studios, and operators at major sporting/concerts/theater venues). The Commission may need to place a broadcaster in the duplex gap in a limited number of markets. However, the Commission sought comment on preserving an additional vacant television channel for use by wireless microphones and white space devices should this occur.

The rules also provide new opportunities for licensed microphone users. In the TV bands, they will be allowed greater use of the VHF channels and co-channel operation inside digital TV contours without coordination if TV signals fall below specified thresholds. The new rules also will allow licensed microphone users to operate on a secondary basis in three additional spectrum bands, consistent with the Commission's spectrum management goals: (1) access to significantly more spectrum in the 900 MHz band; (2) access to a portion of the 1435-1525 MHz band at specified times and places, subject to coordination requirements that protect critical aeronautical mobile telemetry; and (3) access to portions of the 6875-7125 MHz band.

Together with the rules also adopted by the Commission regarding unlicensed wireless microphone use of the 600 MHz band, these new rules provide for efficient sharing of the TV and 600 MHz bands to accommodate various wireless microphone users, while continuing to protect the licensed users of each of the bands. I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Tom Wheeler", is written over a horizontal line.

Tom Wheeler